

Update on the Demographic Profile and Demographic and Housing Characteristics File (DHC)

Discussant:

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General Comments

- Timely and thorough discussion of progress
- Demonstration analyses and results (based DAS) are both systematic and encouraging . . .
 - County-based measures of **accuracy**, **bias**, and **outliers**
 - Little discussion of smaller levels of geography – places, census tracts, blocks
- Although delayed, the good news is that the DHC will be released in in 2023
- Preliminary discussion of how the DHC will inform the construction of PUMS and ACS

Specific Areas of Concern

- Content
- Problem areas
 - geography (rural-urban)
 - 18-24 year-olds (young adult transitions, college students)
 - same-sex couples (marriage/cohabitation)
- Links to 2010 and earlier Census
- Going forward

1. Content

- Is past (2010 and earlier) prologue?
 - The U.S. population is more heterogeneous and diverse than ever.
 - What were the main concerns during the public comment period?
- Why no linking of persons in the household? Does this mean that we have to wait for the Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)?
 - Linking partners in HH (e.g., interracial unions)
 - Linking siblings to each other or other members of the households (e.g., blended families)
 - Linking children to grandchildren (e.g., multi-generation families)

2. Three Specific Problem Areas

- The specific problems identified in the demonstration data (rural-urban geography, age/race composition, family structure) represent rapidly changing areas that require serious attention
 - Any biases, inaccuracies, and outliers will become structured or wrongly inscribed into new legislation, local and state laws, and public policy.
- Zero-sum game – undercount for one group, by definition, means overcount for another group in order to match the PL 94-171 total population at each level of geography.

2(i). Boundary change and unreliable data for smallest geography

- Continuing need for block data – as building blocks to all kinds of policy questions
 - Annexation, neighborhood succession from cities, neighborhoods linked to school districts, GQ-prisons, etc.
- What is a rural and urban place, as defined in the DHC?
 - Is this different from the past? Most rural people actually live in metro counties. Concern that rural people and places are increasing even as America is urbanizing by most criteria?
- Metro-Nonmetro – boundaries change over time as counties are added.
 - Will Census Bureau provide both fixed and floating definitions of metro areas and each of their constituent counties?

2(ii). *What about 18-24 year-olds?*

- Transitions to adulthood – lots of movement – confusion about residence (e.g., snowbirds).
- College-age population – where are they assigned or reassigned?
- Poor or jobless men, especially racial minorities and foreign-born population.

2(iii). *Co-residence among same-sex partners*

- Some states legalized same-sex marriages before June 26, 2015, when the United States Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriages in all 50 states (Obergefell v. Hodges).
 - How did the 2010 demonstration project deal with this fact?
- Wide geographic (rural-urban) differences in the residence patterns of male and female same-sex couples.
 - Are the rural data for same-sex female couples for accurate than same-sex male couples?
- Can children's characteristics (e.g., age) be linked to characteristics of their co-resident bio and step-parents in same-sex households?

3. Some Questions about Linking Data

- Can you tell us more about the crosswalk between 2010 and 2020? What are the Census Bureau's recommendations for studying demographic changes between Censuses (i.e., separating noise from real demographic change)?
 - What were the main concerns expressed during the public comment period? How were they addressed?
 - Will 2010 demonstration data and 2020 DHC data be available using the **same** DAS?
- Will there be a similar “crosswalk” with other Census data products (e.g. ACS and CPS)?
- What is the link to state and local estimates and projections program?
 - 2020 estimates vis-à-vis using 2020 Census?

4. Going Forward

- What is the link between the DHC and the Public Use Microdata (PUMs)? Will they produce similar results?
- How can users distinguish between effects of “swapping” (i.e., missing information) and the effects of DAS?

Comments and Discussion